

## **The Water Balance Model for British Columbia: A Web-Accessible Tool for “Green” Subdivision Design**

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Developed by an Inter-Governmental Partnership as an extension of Stormwater Planning: A Guidebook for British Columbia, the Water Balance Model for BC (WBM) is a decision support and scenario modeling tool. The WBM enables users to compare scenarios for rainwater runoff volume reduction in order to achieve a light “hydrologic footprint”. Built around established soil science principles, the WBM promotes the integration of perspectives through a collegial and interdisciplinary approach that enables planning and design professionals to collaborate to achieve community liveability objectives:

- Planners: Better Use of Space
- Engineers: Infiltration Design
- Landscape Architects: Green Solutions
- Educators: Social Marketing

Before the Water Balance Model was developed, the missing link in watershed planning and subdivision design was a tool that could easily quantify the cumulative benefits - achieved at the neighbourhood and watershed scales - by reducing rainwater runoff volume at the site level. The Inter-Governmental Partnership is a consortium of 21 local, regional, provincial and federal agencies. The success of the WBM in British Columbia has generated interest in expanding the focus of the tool to reach a national audience. This interest has led to development of a national portal – the Water Balance Model for Canada – that was formally launched in March 2005.